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A N
Authentic Account
OF THE LATE
R. E. P. O. T. S,
IN THE TOWN OF
BIRMINGHAM,
AND ITS ENVIRONS,
*With Strictures and Observations on the Cause and Con-
duct of the Rioters; and their real Views and Prin-
ciples pointed out.*
TO WHICH IS ADDED,
Mr. KEIR's Account of the Meeting held
at the Hotel;
Mr. RUSSELL's Refutation of a fallacious Account of
the Toasts, &c. as given in a London Print;
Mr. KEIR's 2nd Letter, giving an Account
of the Toasts, &c. with Observations;
AND
*The Rev. Dr. PRIESTLEY's Letter to the Inhabitants
of Birmingham.*

WRITTEN AND COMPILED
BY A CHURCHMAN.

PRICE SIX-PENCE.

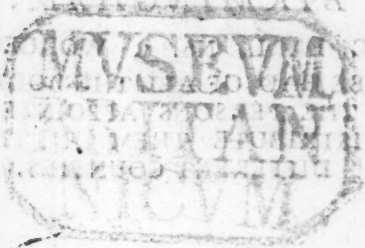
BIRMINGHAM:

PRINTED BY C. EARL, No. 5, WORCESTER-STREET;
AND MAY BE HAD OF ALL THE BOOKSELLERS,
AND THE PERSONS APPOINTED TO
DISTRIBUTE THEM IN THE
DIFFERENT COUNTIES.

P R E F A C E.

*I*N presenting to the Public the Account of the late Riots, every precaution has been taken to state with Accuracy the various Occurrences that have taken place; for which purpose, after having paid particular Attention to the several Accounts already published to the World, which in very many instances do not appear to be Authentic, I have endeavoured to confine myself strictly to Truth, not having wilfully either diminished or exaggerated: perhaps, had I been disposed to do the latter, this publication would have been much enlarged, and my Readers probably more amply gratified. But as past Animosities ought to cease with the Cause, I have thought proper to confine myself in stating the present short Abstracted particulars, for the sole purpose of giving to the Public an Authentic Narrative of the late violent Proceedings.

Birmingham, August 7, 1791.



to which the town of Birmingham is
neighbourhood were reduced, where the
various subjects that have made their
appearance in the other papers

A N

Authentic Account

OF THE LATE

R I O T S.

WHERE we seriously to reflect on the dangerous tendency of Rioting, and the many devastations occasioned thereby, taking place in a civilized country, and more particularly in a country like ours, whose great boast it is of being governed by laws superior to any other country in the world, (and more especially without having any just, or reasonable cause) I am confident that a heart susceptible of the least feeling to the cause of humanity, must shudder at the thoughts of such unnatural and unlawful proceedings: wishing that my respective Readers may have this idea in view, I shall, for brevity sake, and that all may understand the real, as well as pretended cause, of the late awful situation

to which the town of Birmingham and its neighbourhood were reduced, insert the various advertisements that have made their appearance in the public prints, previous to the Meeting at the Hotel; and will make such observations thereon, as may be thought necessary.

The first advertisement that appeared, announced the intended Meeting of the friends of freedom, and is as follows :

" Hotel, Birmingham, July 7th, 1791.

**" COMMEMORATION of the FRENCH
" REVOLUTION.**

" A Number of Gentlemen intend Dining together on the 14th Inst.
" to Commemorate the auspicious Day
" which witnessed the emancipation of
" Twenty-six Millions of People from the
" yoke of Despotism, and restored the
" Blessings of equal Government to a truly
" great and enlightened Nation; with
" whom it is our Interest, as a Commercial
" People, and our duty, as Friends to the
" general Rights of Mankind, to promote
" a free intercourse, as subservient to a
" permanent Friendship.

" Any

" Any Friend to Freedom, disposed to
" join the intended temperate festivity, is
" desired to leave his Name at the Bar of
" the Hotel, where Tickets may be had,
" at 5s. each, including a Bottle of Wine;
" but no person will be admitted without
" one.

" Dinner will be on Table at Three
o'Clock precisely."

On the second appearance of this advertisement in Aris's Birmingham Gazette, the following was inserted in the same paper :

" On Friday next will be published,

" Price ONE HALFPENNY,

" An Authentic List of all those
" who Dine at the Hotel, Temple-Row,
" Birmingham, on Thursday, the 14th
" Inst. in Commemoration of the French
" Revolution.

" *Vivant Rex et Regina.*"

This last advertisement was certainly
meant not only to intimidate the Meeting
at the Hotel, but also to give to the friends
of

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of riot and destruction the alarm; it having been immediately succeeded by a seditious and criminal hand-bill, circulated about the town, written, as 'tis supposed, by the author of the above-mentioned advertisement. This hand-bill had the desired effect; and our worthy active Magistrates, acting in this town, in conjunction with others, anticipating the consequences that would certainly ensue, if such seditious papers were suffered to be in circulation, caused an advertisement to be inserted in Mr. Swinney's paper, and is as follows:

" ONE HUNDRED GUINEAS REWARD.

" *Birmingham, July 13th, 1791.*

" Whereas a certain seditious
 " and criminal hand-bill, intending to in-
 " flame the minds of the people against
 " Government, was circulated in this Town
 " on Monday last, a Reward of One Hun-
 " dred Guineas is hereby offered to any
 " Person, who will discover either the
 " Writer, Printer, Publisher, or Distribu-
 " tor, so that he or they may be convicted
 " thereof.

" J. Carles,	B. Spencer,	W. Villers,
" Edw. Carver,	Cha. Curtis,	Edward Palmer,
" Sam. Garbett,	Henry Clay,	W. Wallis Mason,
" J. Brooke,	Jas. Villers,	John Pankard,

And the Gentlemen who proposed meeting at the Hotel, also caused the underneath to be inserted in the same public print.

"BIRMINGHAM COMMEMORATION

" OF THE

" FRENCH REVOLUTION.

" Several Hand-bills having been
 " circulated in the Town, which can only
 " be intended to create distrust concerning
 " the intention of the Meeting, to disturb
 " its harmony, and inflame the minds of
 " the people; the Gentlemen who pro-
 " posed it, think it necessary to declare
 " their entire disapprobation of all such
 " Hand-bills, and their ignorance of the
 " Authors, Sensible themselves of the Ad-
 " vantages of a Free Government, they
 " rejoice in the extension of Liberty to
 " their Neighbours; at the same time
 " avowing, in the most explicit manner,
 " their firm Attachment to the Constitution
 " of their own Country, as vested in the
 " Three Estates of King, Lords and Com-
 " mons. Surely no Free-born Englishman
 " can refrain from exulting in this addition
 " to the general mass of human happiness?
 " It

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"It is the Cause of Humanity! It is the
Cause of the People!"

"Birmingham, July 13, 1791."

This advertisement appears to me, and I flatter myself will so to every impartial judge, not to have the least tendency whatever to create riots or confusion; on the contrary, in my humble opinion, much praise is due to those gentlemen for their candid declaration of their attachment to their King and country, as by law established. But as great pains have been taken by persons of various descriptions, to insil into the minds of a lawless deluded multitude, that from the improper conduct of this Meeting, sprung the grand engine, or stimulative that gave rise to, and occasioned the various alarms and outrages that followed. Facts are stubborn things, and truth has the pre-eminence over falsehood. It must then, doubtless, be confessed, (whatever base and fabricated reports may have taken place among the pretended friends of our lawful Sovereign and his Church, they having, in no respect, proved to the world any one of their false assertions to be founded in truth) that their rigorous conduct towards the Dissenters originated in a pre-

concerted plan to destroy their persons and property, whether right or wrong. The various tragical events that will hereafter follow, must certainly justify me in this opinion. I shall now attend to the meeting of the Friends of Freedom at the Hotel.

On Thursday the 14th of July, 1791, in conformity to their first advertisement, the Gentlemen intending to commemorate the French Revolution, assembled at the Hotel, to the amount of eighty-one. Dinner was served up at three o'clock; and between five and six, after several toasts had been drank, and a few songs sung, the company separated, and departed to their respective homes. A considerable number of persons had assembled round the Hotel, previous to the Gentlemen's meeting, and on their entering the Hotel there was much hissing, though some few huzzas. At about eight o'clock the tumultuous number had much increased, and regardless of the personal interference of the Magistrates, forcibly entered the Hotel, and broke all the windows in the front of that house.

The mob then attacked the New Meeting-house, and after making free with many

X-1 *Q.1*

X-2 *Burial*

of the moveables, they set it on fire, and in a very short period it was reduced to a skeleton.

B. burnt - 30th 2d Jan - X viewed to me

B. 2.

3 - X

About the same time the Old Meeting-house was attacked by another party: they tore down the pulpit, pews, and galleries, and burnt them in the burying-ground: they afterwards set fire to the body of the Meeting, which alarmed the neighbourhood to so great a degree, that the inhabitants removed their furniture and property out of their houses, for safety. Some gentlemen at this time interfered, and at their earnest request, the mob permitted the engine, which was then attending, to play on the adjoining buildings: fortunately at this time there was little wind stirring, otherwise the conflagration must have proved fatal to many. — It will be here necessary to observe, in order to shew the real cause the mob had in view, that a vast quantity of lead, iron, and various other articles, were taken away by them with as much unconcern as if it had been their own private property.

B. 3.

4 - X

A considerable time before the Old Meeting was burnt down, the principal ring-leaders left that spot, and directed their course

course to Dr. Priestley's, at Fair-Hill, whose house, together with all its furniture, the best part of his valuable library, his still more valuable collection of philosophical instruments and apparatus, as also all his manuscripts, together with other property of considerable value, were entirely destroyed. Thus, in the course of a few hours, a Reverend Divine, an ornament to his country, and a real friend to mankind, was deprived of valuables, which in all probability he will never have it in his power to replace; and the world at large has still sustained a worse loss, by being deprived of having the result of the Doctor's labours for years past, committed to print. Here one man lost his life, and others were much wounded.

Friday morning the 13th. — From Dr. Priestley's a party of the Rioters proceeded to the country residence of John Taylor, Esq. at Bordesley-Hall, and the remainder entered the town, armed with bludgeons, &c. and vociferating "*Church and King*:" they spread a terror wherever they appeared. Those that went to Mr. Taylor's, after exhausting the contents of his cellar, and accepting fifteen guineas worth of ale, to be delivered them at three different pub-

lic houses in Deritend, they agreed that his house should remain unmolested. Perhaps such a scene of intoxication scarcely ever before took place.

B.5. - 6 - X
The party that came to town, joined by others, about two o'clock, (after various noblemen and gentlemen had used every exertion to restore peace and tranquility, and to prevent farther devastations) attacked the elegant mansion of Mr. Ryland, (late Baskerville's) at Easy-Hill. Many of the Rioters lost their lives, others were much maimed and bruised, and were sent to the Hospital, and ten dead bodies have been since dug out of the ruins. A singular circumstance occurred at this place: a man, who had remained immured in one of the vaults from the Friday, worked his way out on the Monday following, but soon after expired on the grass.

3.
Our worthy Magistrates, whilst Mr. Ryland's house was burning, anxious to preserve the town from further outrages, caused a number of the inhabitants to be sworn in as additional Constables: a party of them, with more zeal than conduct, proceeded to Mr. Ryland's, but after a severe conflict they were driven off by the lawless banditti

dition then assembled. If the Constables, instead of falling on the Rioters with their sticks immediately on their arrival, had remonstrated with them on their misconduct, they in all probability might have rendered much service; but as they adopted the former instead of the latter, the good intention was entirely destroyed. As most of the well-meaning and peaceable inhabitants of this town appeared to be of opinion, that the Rioters meant only to direct their vengeance against the gentlemen who composed the meeting at the Hotel, in this it is now found they have been much mistaken; for neither Dr. Priestley nor Mr. Ryland were present.

Notwithstanding the unbounded liberality with which the party of Rioters that went to Mr. Taylor's in the morning had been treated, and the promise they had made that the house should remain safe and secure, yet such was the fixed determination of these intoxicated depredators, that they now positively insisted that the house should come down. Certain information of their real intention having been received in town, another party of the inhabitants, who had been sworn in Constables, headed by Captain Carver and others, repaired to Mr. Taylor's

Taylor's House. On entering the gates, the scene that presented itself was such that I believe few people ever beheld before. Hundreds of the Rioters lying senselessly on the ground and in the cellar, intoxicated with liquor. Captain Carver, ~~with much good sense,~~ aided by the Constables, with fair words, and some hard blows, soon dispersed the numerous lawless intruders, (I mean those that were able to stand) by which means the Captain and his party retained possession for some time, in which interval some of Mr. Taylor's property was removed from off the premises. — The Rioters having now gained additional strength by the party from Mr. Ryland's, again took possession: all resistance appeared ineffectual; though many blows took place, and numbers of the real friends to Church and King were very roughly handled. However, to the honour of Captain Carver, I cannot omit mentioning, (having been an eye witness myself) that he made use of every effort that could tend to preserve, at the risk of his life, this beautiful edifice, but all to no purpose; for after the elegant furniture had been mostly carried off by the multitude, and some small part destroyed, this spacious mansion, together with the out-offices, ricks of hay, &c. fell

&c. fell a sacrifice to a banditti of lawless depredators. The case of Mr. Taylor is singularly distressing; that gentleman and his family having been absent from home upwards of three weeks, and did not know of his property having been destroyed until his arrival, which was on the next day.

One material circumstance I forgot to mention, which ought not to be omitted, and that is, by the interposition of the Rev. Mr. Curtis, and Mr. Carles, the draper, they prevailed on the Rioters, who were proceeding to Mr. Taylor's, to return to town, which they did, headed by the above gentlemen. On their arrival at the Bull-Ring, Mr. Curtis exhorted them to return peaceably to their respective homes; they huzza'd him, and followed him into New-Street. From their then behaviour, many ~~were~~ led to believe they would have dispersed. However, the friends to peace and good order were soon deceived in their expectations, for no sooner had Mr. Curtis left them, than they instantly repaired and vented their rage on Mr. Taylor's property, as above stated.

This night the house of Mr. Hutton, in High-Street, was entered, and compleatly stripped

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stripped of its furniture, a large stock of paper, and a very valuable library of books. This depredation was committed chiefly by boys and prostitutes. A woman made an attempt to fire the house, but was prevented by the populace.

Saturday morning, the 16th.—From Mr. Hutton's house in town, they proceeded to his country house at Washwood-Heath, which, with its offices, &c. they reduced to ashes.

The occasion of Mr. Hutton's being so obnoxious to the Rioters, did not arise from religious principles; but on account of his being an active Commissioner at the Court of Requests.

The same morning the Rioters made an attack on the elegant house of Mr. George Humphreys, at Spark-Brook, but were repulsed, and one man killed. The mob, however, soon after entered the house, and after ransacking it of its valuable furniture, destroying all the inside work, breaking all the windows, and doing other mischief, they went off without burning it.

The reason why this house did not meet the

no in list
B. 6. - 8 - X

no in list
D. 3. - 9 - X

the same fate of the others already mentioned, arose from the following circumstance: about two out of five of the mob were for burning, the remainder were for having it preserved, alledging, that Mr. Humphreys was the best friend the manufacturers had in town; that he kept many of their families from starving, and on that account his house should receive no farther damage than what had already been done to it.

From Mr. Humphreys's the Rioters went to the house of William Russell, Esq. at Showell-Green, which, with the out-offices and buildings, they consumed; and such was the rapidity and violence of the fire, that only a few of the walls remain as a monument of their villiany.

Robt Cook after a fair long trial was capitally convicted at Worcester assizes Monday 8th May 1791. Robt Cook executed at the Hill N. Worcester on Friday Aug. 19th 1791.

Mr. Russell, I believe, was one of the Gentlemen who composed the Meeting at the Hotel, and the only one that attended that Meeting, whose property became so great a prey to the Rioters, ~~as the other Gentlemen that did attend.~~

The next scene of Destruction that took place was at the house of Mr. T. Hawkes, at Moseley-Wake-Green; and although the Rioters had extorted from that Gentleman a

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X 11 D.4

sum of money, in order that his house might be preserved, they now stripped it of its windows, books, and furniture, most part of which was carried off, and that little which was left was broke in pieces.

No. List
B.8-12-X

viewed
The Rioters next object was to wreak their vengeance on Moseley-Hall, another country seat of Mr. Taylor's, but occupied by the Dowager Countess of Carhampton, to whom they had given previous notice to remove her effects; her Ladyship complied with their request; and in the evening this large and valuable stone mansion, together with all the out-offices, hay-ricks, &c. was totally destroyed.

It is a lamentable circumstance to think, that after having destroyed Mr. Taylor's house at Bordesley, ~~that~~ the lawless rabble should seek for further vengeance on a Gentleman who had never done them any harm; on the contrary, he has been the occasion of rendering to the town essential service.

B.9-13-X

The house of Mr. Harwood, in the neighbourhood of Moseley, was also burnt and destroyed.

B.10-14-X

The Rev. Mr. Hobson's, a Dissenting Minister,

nister, on the Moseley road, shared the same fate.

It is impossible to describe the terror and distress which pervaded the whole town this day, while these dreadful scenes were acting; it will be better conceived than described. Business was entirely at a stand, and the shops in general shut up;—the Magistrates had tried every means of persuasion, but to no purpose:—large bills were stuck up, requesting all persons to retire to their respective homes, without having the desired effect;—the approach of the military was uncertain;—the Rioters, with blue cockades in their hats, appeared in small parties in all parts of the town, levying contributions on the inhabitants; if any had the spirit to refuse, their houses was threatened with destruction;—and the prisoners confined for theft, and other misdemeanors, as well as those in confinement for small debts, were all liberated by some of these small parties. The main body, however, kept out of the town; and I sincerely believe, the judicious conduct of the Magistrates, in the appointment of so many Constables, and the severe drubbing which many of the Rioters received at Mr. Taylor's, and other places, was the real cause of their not making their appearance

pearance again ; but kept going on into the country, committing their daring outrages at such places they were most sure of meeting with the least opposition : for,

15-

On Sunday morning, the 17th of July, we find the Rioters at King's-Wood, seven miles distance from town, extorting money and liquors, and what else they could get at, from the peaceable inhabitants, as they passed along. At King's-Wood they destroyed the Dissenting Meeting-house, and the dwelling-house of the Minister ; as also the premises of Mr. Cox, farmer, at Worstock.

24-

25-

16-X

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Another party we find the same day at Edgbaston-Hall, the residence of Dr. Withering, (although they had been there the preceeding day) ransacking and plundering the house of furniture, &c. There is not the least doubt that the house would have been destroyed, had not an account arrived at that moment, that the military were come, or near approaching to town : on this information the Rioters dispersed—Conscious of their guilt, they vanished much quicker than they at first assembled.

This night, soon after ten, three troops of the Fifteenth Light Dragoons arrived, amidst

* Worcester affires Aug 3 before B. N. E. W. William Aice charged with this offence was ordered to be re-conducted to prison on the ground of another charge but was acquitted on the charge of George Giles for robbing him on the highway near King's Norton of Two Guineas.

amidst the acclamations of thousands of the inhabitants. The town was immediately illuminated, and before morning every thing appeared tolerably quiet.

The arrival of the military not only dissipated the apprehensions of the inhabitants, but immediately restored tranquility to the town, in which there has been neither riot or disturbance since.

The Rioters who committed the depredations at King's-Wood, continued their route towards King's-Norton, Bromsgrove, and Hales-Owen, dividing themselves into small parties. At most houses they came to they generally pillaged. And on

Tuesday, the 19th of July — A body of the Rioters assaulted Mr. Male's house, at Belle Vue, near the Leasowes. The people in the neighbourhood, with a becoming spirit, assembled, overpowered the Rioters, and took ten of them prisoners; since which this lawless banditti, which had the two preceeding days so much alarmed and terrified the country, has not since been heard of; the Light Horse having scoured the country upwards of ten miles round, but did not meet with one Rioter. The manufactory

factories are at this time at work, and all trades and businesses are now going forward in that peaceable and orderly manner becoming true and loyal subjects to King and Country, and as if no interruption had taken place.

As there were various other houses in the neighbourhood of the town, besides those already noticed as being destroyed, that were assaulted and pillaged during the tumults, but which were saved from complete destruction, either by the exertions and persuasions of the neighbours, or by the gift of money or liquor. Among these that particularly suffered, were the houses of Mr. T. Russell, near Moseley; of Mr. Harry Hunt, at Lady-Wood; of the Rev. Mr. Coates, at the Five-Ways; and Mr. Smith's house, (Hay-Hall.) Mr. Jukes having intimation that his house near the Green Lanes was to be attacked, very prudently the night before removed all his furniture, liquors, &c. took out his sashes and window-frames, and conveyed whatever the Rioters were likely to pull down to a place of security; so that when they arrived, either supposing another party had been before them, or not choosing to waste their time on a place that afforded no plunder, they left it untouched; and

19 - X
20 -
21 -
22 - X
23 -

and by this manœuvre Mr. Jukes saved his habitation.

Wednesday, the 20th of July. Three troops of the Eleventh Regiment of Light Dragoons, and on Friday three troops of the First Regiment of Dragoon Guards, marched into town. Colonel De Lancey arrived, with an Aid du Camp, on Tuesday, from the King, to take command of the military; and such was his Majesty's anxiety to provide for the security of this neighbourhood, that he had given orders for a vast number of troops to march for our relief, from different quarters. Tranquillity being happily restored, the progress of the greater part of them, it is supposed, will be stopped.

Monday, the 25th of July. Our Magistrates, the Rev. Dr. Spencer and Joseph Carles, Esq. have been unwearied in their official attentions during the whole of these tumultuous proceedings; and have been aided by the personal advice and attendance of the following Noblemen, Magistrates, and Gentlemen, of this and the neighbouring counties: the Earl of Aylesford, the Earl of Plymouth, Captain Finch, Sir Robert Lawley, Mr. Cecil, Mr. Moland, Mr. Digby,

Digby, Mr. Holbecke, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Dixon, and Mr. Woodcock.

Many of the Rioters are now in custody; and this day his Majesty's Justices sit at the Swan Inn, to receive informations. An eminent Counsel, with the Treasury Solicitor, and Mr. Justice Bond, one of the acting Magistrates belonging to the Public Office in Bow-Street, are arrived from London, to assist them in their enquiries into the origin and cause of the unfortunate transactions here related; for the purpose, if report says true, "that some proper and dignified measure may be pursued in consequence thereof, to shew the sense of Government, and prevent the like evils in future."

Before I close this Narrative, I beg leave to inform my readers, by the advice of many well-wishers to truth, I mean to add,

The Letters of Mr. Kier, respecting the Meeting at the Hotel, and the Toasts given at that place; the refutation of William Russell, Esq. of a fallacious account of the Toasts, &c. given in a London print; and, Dr. Priestley's Letter to the inhabitants of Birmingham; as it is conceived from the contents

contents thereof, such information may be derived as will, it is supposed, at a certainty, with what has been already advanced on the subject, put it out of all manner of doubt, that the conduct of the Gentlemen who attended the Commemoration of the French Revolution, at the Hotel, was such as in no respect deviated from the character of true and loyal subjects to our most gracious King, and consequently they cannot, in any point of view, be considered by the real well-wishers to their King and Country, as the authors, promoters, or cause of the late Riots: if this be admitted, it must naturally follow, that the fountain from whence these troubles and devastations took their rise, sprang from a premeditated plan, concerted by some person or persons unknown, who must have committed their secret intentions to a lawless mob, who wanted only a pretence for depredation.

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Mr. KEIR'S

Mr. KEIR's Letter, addressed to the Printer of the Birmingham and Stafford Chronicle, giving an Account of the Meeting held at the Hotel.

Mr. Printer,

AS I find that many gross falshoods have been circulated through the country, in order to inflame the minds of the people, concerning the meeting held last Thursday, to commemorate the French Revolution, I will beg leave to state what I myself have had occasion to know respecting that subject. Some gentlemen in Birmingham had proposed by an advertisement in the newspapers, to hold a meeting of the friends of liberty and of mankind, at the Hotel, to commemorate the French Revolution, in the same manner as was done in London, and many other parts in the Kingdom. Two days before the time appointed for this meeting, a very respectable gentleman called on me, and said he came to tell me that it was the general wish of those who intended to meet, that I should be their chairman on the occasion. I accepted the compliment, and promised to come to Birmingham to attend; never conceiving that a peaceable meeting, for the purpose of rejoicing that Twenty-six millions of our fellow creatures were rescued from despotism, and made as free and as happy as we Britons are, could be misinterpreted as being offensive to a government, whose greatest boast is liberty; or to any who profess the Christian religion, which orders us *to love our neighbours as ourselves*. We accordingly met and dined with the greatest peace and harmony, and after drinking some toasts, expressive in the first place of our loyalty to our own *King and Constitution*, and in the second place, of our joy at the happiness which the French have acquired by their new Constitution, we dissolved the meeting entirely, in the greatest order,

order, between five and six in the evening, and quitted the Hotel, every man retiring separately to his home, or to his private affairs. I returned to my house in the country, nor knew of the disturbances till next day. The meeting in London was conducted with the same decorum; nor has there been an instance, as far as I know, in the many similar meetings throughout England, of the smallest irregularity attempted by them. Now, Mr. Printer, as actions are the best interpreters of mens' intentions, it is evident that the malicious insinuations, that these meetings were intended to disturb the peace and government of the country, have been by the event proved to be false and groundless.

I have lately heard that it is reported that we drank disloyal and seditious toasts. Now the very first Toast that was given was *The King and the Constitution*. I do not know any words in the English language expressive of greater loyalty. And one of the last Toasts was *Peace and Good-will to all Mankind*, which cannot easily be interpreted to excite people to tumult. I shall hereafter publish a list of all the Toasts, which were altogether in the same spirit of Loyalty, Peace, and Charity.

A second report is, that Justice Carles was insulted and turned out of the room. The fact is, that Justice Carles never was in the room, and therefore it is not easy to conceive how he could be turned out. I will add, that I have not the smallest doubt, that if that gentleman had come, he would have been received with due respect.

A third false report was, that a Seditious Hand-bill had been distributed by the members of the meeting, on some preceding day. A seditious, and truly infamous hand-bill had been distributed, it is true, but by whom written or distributed is not known. It is

heartily to be wished that the persons concerned may be discovered and punished according to law. As soon as the gentlemen of Birmingham, who had concerted the Commemoration Meeting, saw this hand-bill, they perceived that the effect, and perhaps the intention of it, was to inflame the mob against them, and they immediately published in the Thursday's newspaper, an advertisement declaring their disavowal of this hand-bill, and their own loyal attachment to the *King, Lords, and Commons*. They also sent hand-bills, with copies of this advertisement, all over Birmingham. It was not possible for them to do any thing more effectual to prevent any bad effects from this seditious paper, or to rescue themselves from the calumny of their being the authors of it.

The last false report that I have heard relative to that meeting, is concerning Dr. Priestley's behaviour there. To this I suppose it will be sufficient to answer, that *Dr. Priestley was not present*.

These are all the reports which I have heard, but I doubt not there may be many others, of the truth of which every man of common sense will judge from what I have said, of those which have come to my knowledge. Nevertheless, these false reports are all pretences for the late horrible riots; but the event shews that they were only *pretences*, and that the Dissenters were the true object of the fury of the mob, as many of those gentlemen who have suffered from the riots, were not present. For the business of the Commemoration Meetings had nothing to do with religious distinctions, and were in other parts composed of Church-men, Catholics, and Dissenters. It is true, that in Birmingham the majority were Dissenters; but it is evident that they did not wish it to be distinguished as a party meeting, when they did me the honour to chuse me as their chairman, who, it is evident, must have conformed, in order to qualify myself

myself for the commissions which I have held in the army, to all the formalities prescribed by the test act, and who never was present in a Dissenting meeting above once or twice in England; although I have the greatest regard for the Dissenting individuals whom I know, among whom are several of the late unfortunate victims, men as peaceable, respectable, and loyal, as any in the kingdom. But as the subject of the Commemoration Meeting was quite unknown to the ignorant part of the people, it gave an opportunity of raising any lies that were necessary to inflame the mob to execute their horrid purposes. But that the proceedings of the meeting were innocent, peaceable and honourable, and also free from every subject relative to religious parties, I solemnly affirm.

I am, Mr. Printer,

Yours, &c.

JAMES KEIR.

*West-Bromwich, 20th
July, 1791.*

Mr. Russell's Refutation of a fallacious Account of the Toasts, &c. given in a London Print, called The Times, at the late Gallic Commemoration Dinner at the Hotel, Birmingham; addressed to the Editor of the Star, a London Paper.

S I R,

BEING in London, and seeing in *The Times* of yesterday the most atrocious calumny, that ever was laid before the public, I feel it my duty immediately to contradict it in the most pointed terms. I do therefore declare,

declare, that the narrative of the proceedings of the Birmingham Constitutional Dinner is materially untrue, and that the account given of the first Toast is a most flagrant falsehood. The first at the Meeting in question was, *The King and Constitution*.

The Meeting broke up and dissolved without the least riot or disturbance.—That the public may judge, whether the proceedings of the day and the Toasts were or were not reprehensible, the following true narrative is now produced, the authenticity and truth of which I will vouch for.

The proceedings of the day were preceded by an Advertisement in the Birmingham Chronicle, published that morning, of which the following is a copy :

BIRMINGHAM COMMEMORATION OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

“ Several Hand-bills having been circulated in the
“ Town, which can only be intended to create distrust
“ concerning the intention of the Meeting, to disturb
“ its harmony and inflame the minds of the people,
“ the Gentlemen who proposed it, think it necessary
“ to declare their entire disapprobation of all such
“ Hand-bills, and their ignorance of the authors;—
“ Sensible themselves of the advantages of a Free
“ Government, they rejoice in the extension of Liberty
“ to their Neighbours, at the same time avowing in
“ the most explicit manner, their firm attachment to
“ the Constitution as vested in the Three Estates of
“ King, Lords, and Commons: Surely no *Free-born*
“ *Englishman* can refrain from exulting in this addition
“ to the general mass of human happiness; it is the
“ cause of *Humanity*, it is the cause of the People.”

“ Birmingham, July 13, 1791.

In

In the morning, however, after this was published, many rumours of the probability of riot were brought to the friends of the Meeting; and as there was too much reason to think that means had been used to promote one, they determined to postpone the intended Dinner, and accordingly agreed to put it off, and prepared a hand-bill for that purpose, of which the following is a copy:

**“INTENDED COMMEMORATION
“ OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.**

“ The Friends of the intended Festivity finding
“ that their views and intention, in consequence of
“ being misconceived by some, and misrepresented by
“ others, have created an alarm in the minds of the
“ majority of the town, and it is thought, endangered
“ its tranquility, inform their neighbours, that they
“ value the peace of town, far beyond the gratification
“ of a Festival, and therefore have determined to give
“ up their intentions of dining at the Hotel upon this
“ occasion; and they very gladly improve this re-
“ newed opportunity of declaring that they are to this
“ hour entirely ignorant of the Author, Printer, or
“ Publisher, of the inflammatory Hand-bill circulated
“ on Monday.”

This was sent to the Printer, but before he had composed it, Mr. Dadley, the master of the Hotel, attended in consequence of having the dinner countermanded; and represented, that he was sure there was no danger of any tumult, and recommended that the dinner might be had as was intended; only proposing, that the gentlemen should take care to break up early, and then all danger would be avoided. This measure was then adopted, and orders given to the Printer to suppress the hand-bill. Accordingly there was a meeting of eighty-one gentlemen, inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, at the Great Room in the Hotel,

Hotel, where they dined and passed the afternoon with that social, temperate, and benevolent festivity, which the consideration of the great event that has diffused liberty and happiness among a large portion of the human race, inspired.

The following Toasts were drank, and were agreeably intermixed with songs, composed and sung by some of the Company.

1. The King and Constitution.
2. The National assembly and Patriots of France, whose virtue and wisdom have raised twenty-six millions from the mean condition of subjects of despotism, to the dignity and happiness of freemen.
3. The majesty of the people.
4. May the New Constitution of France be rendered perfect and perpetual.
5. May Great Britain, Ireland, and France, unite in perpetual friendship, and may their only rivalry be the extension of peace and liberty, wisdom and virtue.
6. The rights of Man. May all nations have the wisdom to understand, and the courage to assert and defend them.
7. The true Friends of the Constitution of this Country, who wish to preserve its spirit, by correcting its abuses.
8. May the people of England never cease to remonstrate, till their Parliament becomes a true National Representation.
9. The

9. The Prince of Wales.

10. The United States of America. May they for ever enjoy the liberty which they have so honourably acquired.

11. May the late Revolution in Poland prove the harbinger of a more perfect system of liberty extending to that great kingdom.

12. May the Nations of Europe become so enlightened as never more to be deluded into savage wars, by the mad ambition of their rulers.

13. May the sword never be unsheathed, but for the defence and liberty of our country, and then, may every man cast away the scabbard, until the people are safe and free.

14. To the glorious memory of Hampden and Sydney, and other heroes of all ages and nations, who have fought and bled for liberty.

15. To the memory of Dr. Price, and of all those illustrious sages who have enlightened mankind on the true principles of civil society.

16. Peace and good-will to all mankind.

17. Prosperity to the town of Birmingham.

18. A happy Meeting to all the Friends of Liberty on the 14th of July, 1792.

It is but justice to the liberality and public spirit of an ingenious Artist of this town to mention, that he decorated the room upon this occasion with three elegant emblematic pieces of Sculpture, mixed with painting, in a new style of composition. The central
F piece

piece was a finely executed medallion of his Majesty, encircled with a Glory, on each side of which was an alabaster Obelisk — one exhibiting Gallic Liberty breaking the bands of Despotism, and the other representing British Liberty in its present enjoyment,

A truly respectable Gentleman, a Member of the Church of England, was Chairman—others of that profession were of the company; nor was a single sentiment uttered, or, I believe, conceived, that would hurt the feelings of any one friend to Liberty and good Government, under the happy Constitution we are blessed with in this kingdom.—I aver this to be a true and just representation of the proceedings, which have been so scandalously misrepresented in the paper above mentioned;

And am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

WILLIAM RUSSELL.

London, July 20, 1791.

Mr. KEIR's Second Letter, addressed to the Printer of Aris's Birmingham Gazette, giving an Account of the Toasts at the Hotel, with his Observations thereon.

Mr. Printer,

I BEG leave to acquaint the Public with the proceedings of the meeting, held at the Hotel in this town, on the 14th of July, for celebrating the French Revolution. As the Toasts then drank, have been wonderfully misrepresented, and brought into
more

more consequence by the late riots than they otherwise would merit. I think it necessary to add such remarks as may be requisite to shew their true spirit and intent.

Eighty-one gentlemen, inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, met at the great room in the Hotel, where they dined and passed the afternoon, with that social, temperate, and benevolent festivity which the consideration of the great event, that has diffused happiness and liberty among a large portion of the human race, inspired.

It is but justice to the liberality and public spirit of an ingenious artist of this town, to mention, that he decorated the room upon this occasion, with three elegant emblematic pieces of sculpture, mixed with painting, in a new style of composition. The central piece was a finely executed medallion of his *Majesty*, encircled with a *Glory*, on each side of which was an alabaster obelisk; one exhibiting *Gallic liberty* breaking the bonds of despotism, and the other representing *British liberty* in its present enjoyment.

The following Toasts were drank, and were agreeably intermixed with songs, composed and sung by some of the Company.

I. The King and Constitution.

It is the duty of all loyal subjects to support the constitution, as it is, even if there be some less perfect parts in which a reformation may be wished. But such a reformation ought to be wished to take place by legal means, and not by tumults. It was with the same view of reprobating all thoughts of introducing reformations by violence, that I had occasion, in a former publication, * to remark upon Mr. Burke's

F 2

pamphlet,

* Life of Mr. Day.

pamphlet, that if he vilified the French revolution in order to deter us from following the same example, his fears were unnecessary; because "Happily the same necessity does not exist in this country. For although our government may not be the best possible, it is certainly too good to risk any public convulsion, in hopes of a better, or to attempt any other change than such as may naturally follow from the progressive advancement and extension of knowledge among the people, by which our constitution may be rather restored to its true principles, which are excellent, and farther improved and adapted to the cultivated genius of the age, than altered or overturned." These, then, were the sentiments which I declared and avowed in a time of more deliberation, and before the present occasion could suggest them; namely, that the principles of our constitution are excellent; that the only reformation wanted, is such as shall restore the constitution to these principles, but shall not alter or overturn it; and that no reformation ought to be attempted by violence. If any one ask, what are these principles of the constitution that are excellent, I answer, it is the division of the Sovereign power into three independent estates, King, Lords, and Representatives of the people. These principles require that the representation of the people should be equal, that is, that equal numbers should send an equal number of members to Parliament; and upon these principles the constitution was originally formed, but the changes which time has introduced has unhinged all this equality. Old Sarum, now reduced to a single house, sends two members, while Birmingham, as a town with its seventy thousand inhabitants, sends no representative. Little boroughs will generally sell their votes to the best bidder: large bodies of men cannot be bribed. A more equal representation is the only means of obtaining a more independent parliament, and has always been the object which the most independent

pendent and patriotic men in every part of England have endeavoured to obtain by petitions and remonstrances to parliament, but hitherto without success.

2. *The prosperity and immortality of the glorious system of Government ratified in the Champ de Mars on the ever memorable 14th of July, 1790.

3. The National assembly and Patriots of France, whose virtue and wisdom have raised twenty-six millions from the mean condition of subjects of despotism, to the dignity and happiness of freemen.

4. The majesty of the people.

By this expression is meant the dignity and importance of the people, for whose good all governments ought to be instituted. The majesty of the people is a parliamentary expression.

5. May the New Constitution of France be rendered perfect and perpetual.

It is to be hoped that the French may improve their present constitution, the principal imperfection of which is the circumstance in which it differs from ours, namely, the want of a third estate, or house of Lords, to hold a ballance between the King and the People. I wish to shew that the opinions delivered here are not suggested on this occasion, and I therefore must beg leave to add another quotation from my late publication. (The Life of Mr. Day) "Although the essential preliminaries to the firm establishment
" of

* This Toast was not inserted in the original list, but was written on a separate piece of paper by the gentleman who proposed it. When Mr. Russell, found it necessary to publish the Toasts in a London paper, he was obliged to omit this Toast, because he had not a copy of it, not having been inserted in the original list.

“ of a free constitution in France have been accom-
 “ plished, much yet remains to be done towards its
 “ final completion; and for this purpose, time and
 “ security are requisite. Whatever judgment then
 “ we can form at present may be premature. Per-
 “ haps the apparently too democratic spirit of the pre-
 “ sent system may be hereafter qualified by the insti-
 “ tution of a Senate or permanent Magistracy, simi-
 “ lar in its effects to our House of Peers, to whom
 “ such privileges may be granted as shall be necessary
 “ for their independence, not as nobles, but as a body
 “ forming an essential part of the state; who, by
 “ poising the powers of the crown, and of the people,
 “ and by forming a barrier between the executive and
 “ legislative authorities, may keep these distinct, and
 “ give to the whole government, the stability and dig-
 “ nity becoming a great empire.

As the French give a free scope to their reason in
 political discussions, not yet being divided into parties
 which have interests different from the general inte-
 rest, we may hope at least for a greater perfection of
 the French constitution than has hitherto been seen,
 not only for a further extension and security of the
 happiness of that great people, but also that the go-
 vernments of other nations, seeing the good effects of
 their institutions, may adopt whatever is wanting to
 render their own more perfect. With this view the
 following words had been added to the toast, “ as a
 glorious example to all ages and nations; ” but I did
 not pronounce them from the chair, from a notion
 which then struck me, that among so great a number,
 some people might be so inaccurate as not to distin-
 guish that the example is not proposed in the present
 imperfect state of the French constitution, but in the
 perfect state which does not exist, but is the object of
 the wish of the toast. From the circumstances that
 I have pointed out, in which the French constitution
 is inferior to our own, as well as from many other
 considerations,

considerations, although I admire the French Revolution as a French Revolution, I heartily deprecate its imitation in Great Britain and Ireland.

6. May Great Britain, Ireland, and France, unite in perpetual friendship, and may their only rivalry be the extension of peace and liberty, wisdom and virtue.

7. The rights of Man. May all nations have the wisdom to understand, and the courage to assert and defend them.

The rights of man extend to a freedom in every thing which does not interfere with the rights of his neighbour, or to the good of the community, as expressed by the law. It is clear then that they do not extend to the pulling down, and burning of other men's houses.

8. The true Friends of the Constitution of this Country, who wish to preserve its spirit, by correcting its abuses.

The principal abuse is the unequal distribution of the power of electing members of parliament, as was before observed.

8. May the people of England never cease to remonstrate, till their Parliament becomes a true National Representation.

Nothing can more fully shew the orderly and loyal sense of the meeting than this toast, which expresses that however unremitting we should be in our endeavours to procure a reform in the representation of the people, it is only by *remonstrating*, that these endeavours are to be executed.

10. The

10. The Prince of Wales. May he have the wisdom to prefer the glory of being the chief of an entire and free people, to that of being the splendid fountain of corruption.

Although this toast has no reference whatever to the past or present times, and expresses only a wish that in some future time, when it shall please God, in the ordinary course of nature, to call the Prince to his inheritance, he may have the wisdom to prefer good to evil; and that then, or before that time, the parliament may have granted, what the friends of liberty have so often petitioned, a more perfect representation of the people, by means of which they will be the true and uncorrupt representatives of the entire nation, and the King will preside there as chief, with a splendor and dignity which a partial representation cannot give: it may nevertheless be not improper here to say something of that corruption which has been often imputed to ministers since the revolution under King William; that is, the practice of bestowing places, pensions, honours, and other emoluments in the gift of the crown, for the purpose of obtaining influence and majorities in parliament. Before the revolution, Kings governed by prerogative. When that was circumscribed, ministers found that they could not carry on the measures of government without the consent of parliament, and that majorities were not always to be gained without acquiring an influence by the choice which the constitution gave them in the disposal of the favours of the crown. The fault then was evidently not in the ministers, but in the representatives, the majority of whom being chosen by little boroughs, instead of the great body of the people, rendered this influence necessary. Some political writers maintain, that influence is an admirable system of government: and it must be confessed that no nation ever enjoyed more liberty and happiness than this has done for the past century.

century. But every thing in this world has its limits. We have the authority of the celebrated vote of a House of Commons for saying, "that the influence of the crown has encreased, is encreasing, and ought to be diminished." According to this progression, may we not fear that unless some stop be put to it, in some future time, the crown may become what the toast deprecates, a splendid fountain of corruption? In the year 1780, associations were formed of the most patriotic and independent gentlemen in different counties of England, to obtain a reform in parliament, as the only remedy against this encreasing evil. To give an idea of the corruption which then prevailed, it may not be improper to quote a passage of a memorial drawn up by the deputies of the county of York, Surrey, Middlesex, Gloucester, Hertford, Kent, Huntingdon, Dorset, Bucks, Chester, Devon, and Essex. "We are now arrived, (said these deputies) at the crisis which the wisest of political writers have uniformly marked for the downfall of Britain," when the legislative body shall become as corrupt as the executive and dependent upon it. "Let any man look back to the laws which have passed only in the ten last sessions of parliament, forming, as it were, step by step, a code of prerogative, and then doubt if the executive has not found its way to the corruption of the legislative. Let him behold a venal majority in the House of Commons, session after session, moving obsequious to the nod of the minister, and giving the legislative sanction to propositions not only big with the fate of their country, but often militating against the first principles of the constitution, and the declared voice of their constituents; and then let him judge how enormous that corruption must be." It is well known that Mr. Pitt, his Majesty's present Minister, wrote to the Chairman of these Deputies, the Rev. Mr. Wyvill, promising to move the House of Commons for a reform in the Parliamentary

tary representation, which promise he fulfilled, but though he was then Minister, could not gain a majority. The time may nevertheless arrive, and what better omen can there be than the concurrence of the two heads of our political parts, Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox, in this great question. Soon may it arrive to gild the setting sun of the present reign, and be the glory of every succeeding one! *

11. The United States of America. May they for ever enjoy the liberty which they have so honourably acquired.

12. May the late Revolution in Poland prove the harbinger of a more perfect system of liberty extending to that great kingdom.

13. May the nations of Europe become so enlightened as never to be deluded into savage wars, by the mad ambition of their rulers.

14. May the sword never be unsheathed but for the defence and liberty of our country, and then, may every man cast away the scabbard, until the people are safe and free.

The man who will not fight in defence of his country, does not deserve the protection of it, and he who

* In the list of Toasts published in the London papers by Mr. Russell, this Toast is given, *The Prince of Wales*, without the additional sentence. This difference arises from a mistake of mine. The toast in the original list, was as Mr. Russell has given it. The additional sentence was proposed, and written in the Chairman's list, but upon re-consideration it was ordered to be omitted, but forgot to be expunged; and in the hurry of the day, I pronounced it, by an unintentional mistake, for which I beg the indulgence of the gentlemen who directed the toasts. The additional sentence had never been inserted in Mr. Russell's list, and he therefore could not give it in London.

who will not fight for liberty, deserves to be a slave, excepting those always, whose conscience forbids them to fight.

15. To the glorious memory of Hampden and Sydney, and other heroes of all ages and nations, who have fought and bled for liberty.

16. To the memory of Dr. Price, and of all those illustrious sages who have enlightened mankind on the true principles of civil society.

17. Peace and good will to all mankind. .

An admirable text, and I wish the Christian preachers of all denominations would enforce it with all their eloquence. Let us remember that Churchmen and Dissenters are all made in the same mould, and subject to the same passions, and that the differences arise from education and accident; let us remember that the animosities among the good people of all parties, arise from the misconception of each other; let us all conspire in acquiring the sentiments expressed in the toast, and when once acquired, we shall certainly never abandon them.

18. Prosperity to the Town of Birmingham.

19. A happy meeting to all the friends of liberty on the 14th of July, 1792.

I am, Mr. Printer,

Yours, &c.

JAMES KEIR.

July 24, 1791.

*Dr. PRIESTLEY'S Letter to the Inhabitants of the
Town of Birmingham.*

My late Townsmen and Neighbours,

AFTER living with you eleven years, in which you had uniform experience of my peaceful behaviour, in my attention to the quiet studies of my profession, and those of philosophy, I was far from expecting the injuries which I and my friends have lately received from you. But you have been misled by hearing the Dissenters, and particularly the Unitarian Dissenters, continually railed at, as enemies to the present Government, in Church and State. You have been led to consider any injury done to us as a meritorious thing; and not having been better informed, the means were not attended to. When the *object* was right, you thought the *means* could not be wrong. By the discourses of your teachers, and the exclamations of your superiors in general, drinking confusion and damnation to us, (which is well known to have been their frequent practice,) your bigotry has been excited to the highest pitch, and nothing having been said to you to moderate your passions, but every thing to inflame them; hence, without any consideration on your part, or on theirs, who ought to have known, and taught you better — you were prepared for every species of outrage; thinking that whatever you could do to spite and injure us, was for the support of Government, and especially the Church. In *destroying us*, you have been led to think, *you did* God and your country the most substantial *service*.

Happily, the minds of Englishmen have a horror of *murder*, and therefore you did not, I hope, think of *that*; though, by your clamorous demanding of *me* at the Hotel, it is probable that, at that time, some of
you

you intended me some personal injury. But what is the value of life, when every thing is done to make it wretched. In many cases, there would be greater mercy in dispatching the inhabitants than burning their houses. However, I infinitely prefer what I feel from *the spoiling of my goods*, to the disposition of those who have misled you.

You have destroyed the most truly valuable and useful apparatus of philosophical instruments that perhaps any individual in this or any other country, was ever possessed of, in my use of which I annually spent large sums, with no pecuniary view whatever, but only in the advancement of science, for the benefit of my country, and of mankind. You have destroyed a library corresponding to that apparatus, which no money can repurchase, except in a long course of time. But what I feel far more, you have destroyed *manuscripts*, which have been the result of the laborious study of many years, and which I shall never be able to recompose; and this has been done to one who never did, or imagined you any harm.

I know nothing more of the *hand-bill* which is said to have enraged you so much than any of yourselves, and I disapprove of it as much; though it has been made the ostensible handle of doing infinitely more mischief than any thing of that nature could possibly have done.—In the celebration of the first Anniversary at which I did not attend, the company assembled on the occasion only expressed their joy in the emancipation of a neighbouring nation from tyranny, without intimating a desire of any thing more than such an improvement of our own Constitution, as all sober citizens, of every persuasion, have long wished for. And though, in answer to the gross and unprovoked calumnies of Mr. Madan and others, I publicly vindicated my principles as a Dissenter, it was only with plain and sober argument, and with
perfect

perfect good humour. We are better instructed in the mild and forbearing spirit of Christianity, than ever to think of having recourse to *violence*; and can you think such conduct as yours any recommendation of your religious principles, in preference to ours?

You are still more mistaken if you imagine that this conduct of yours has any tendency to serve your cause, or to prejudice ours. It is nothing but *reason* and *argument* that can ever support any system of religion. Answer our arguments and your business is done. But your having recourse to *violence* is only a proof that you have nothing better to produce. Should you destroy myself as well as my house, library, and apparatus, ten more persons, of equal or superior spirit and ability, would instantly rise up. If those ten were destroyed, an hundred would appear; and believe me, that the Church of England, which you think you are supporting, has received a greater blow by this conduct of yours, than I and all my friends have ever aimed at it.

Besides, to abuse those who have no power of making resistance, is equally cowardly and brutal, to say nothing of Christianity, which teaches us to do as we would be done by. In this business we are the sheep and you the wolves. We will preserve our character, and hope you will change yours. At all events, we return you blessings for curses; and pray that you may soon return to that industry, and those sober manners, for which the inhabitants of Birmingham were formerly distinguished. I am,

Your sincere well-wisher,

J. PRIESTLEY.

London, July 19, 1791.



F I N I S.

1791

Some of the workmen at the Rich's Loom
Holy Day at Mr. Boulton's Loom manufactory

applies at Worcester Began Monday Aug 8th - Baron
Clyne reproached the treasurers & inflammatory handbill that had
been dispersed which he termed a Seditious, abominable &
scandalous Libel that not only attacked the House of Commons but every
part of the legislative body. a Baron the Lord Ship
observed had been propagated that the author of the vile & treasurers
publication alluded to was a partisan of the established Church and idea
not founded in Reason, it being impossible to form any judgment, whether
measures might be pursued, or what disparagements committed by a mob
composed of the lower ranks of the Community

See page 17 & add. That Colley charged with like offence burning
house of Mr. Linnier, a private See also paper. the Council for
the town met. a fair. Baron Shinnel at Leicester - for the prisoners and
Leicester and Wigley the two members of the City of Worcester

at Warwick applies commencing Monday Aug 22nd Baron
Perrin - (with Baron Hotham) address of the Jury said
- whatever was the cause of the disturbances nothing could
justify them - all subjects of every persuasion were entitled
to the protection of the Law - But it was strange, he said
such violent persecution should take place in a
season of perfect toleration

a riot happened at Bradford in Yorkshire May 14 1791
action brought by Mr. Helms against the hundred for damages done
thereby in demolishing his house & furniture and a machine
used in scribbling wool was taken from his workshops & burnt
Jury gave a verdict for the damages the learned Judge
Bulles observations to the Jury concerning up the evidence
- are worthy of being recorded. R.W. - (In Swinney's D. Vol. 25)
It takes up almost the whole 2nd column of second page

Coaches go to Birmingham at this time, inside Guinea, but 1/2 of

TRIALS of the RIOTERS.

THE Public are respectfully informed, that as soon as the various RIOTERS have been tried for the different offences by them committed, it is intended to publish their

TRIALS at LARGE:

And that a Gentleman will attend the Assizes at *Warwick*, for the purpose of taking every particular down in Short-hand; and that as soon as the Trials are over, they will be published with all possible expedition, by C. EARL, No. 5, *Worcester-Street, Birmingham.*

